MUSTE NOTES
News from the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute
VOLUME 23, NUMBER 1 FALL 2015

September 22, 2015

Dear Friends,

We received an inspiring batch of Social Justice Fund grant proposals this summer. They came from young people engaging in direct action for racial justice, veterans speaking out against war, immigrants organizing for human rights, families opposing the death penalty, and activists working to prevent an eruption of violence in Burundi and to end the decades-old occupation of Palestine... just to mention a few. With your help, we will support them all—our biggest cycle yet—and continue to expand the resources we provide for nonviolent resistance.

If you have already donated this year, thank you! Your gifts make it all possible.

Transition notes: Dan Kent joined the board in April, bringing valuable experience working with social justice nonprofits. In June, Rodolfo Diaz-Reyes left the board to focus on other projects, and David McReynolds, one of the Institute's original founders, retired from active board duties after more than four decades of service.

The Peace Pentagon's move to a new space is developing quickly. We can't yet reveal any details, but stay tuned for an exciting announcement coming soon.

Sincerely,

Heidi Boghosian
Executive Director

Free Oscar López Rivera!

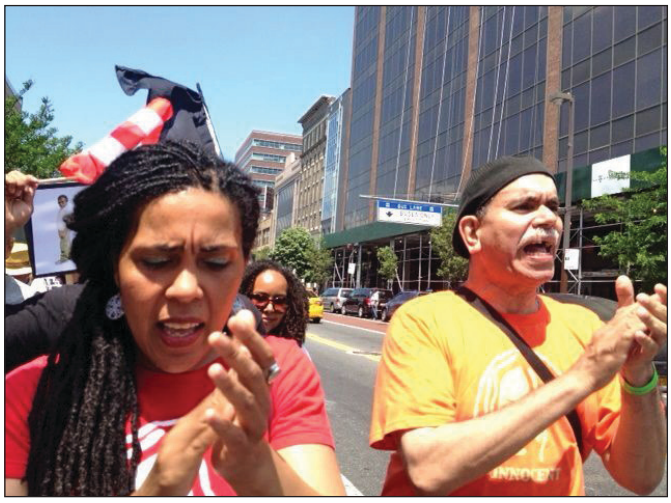
PHOTO: HEIDI BOGHOSIAN

May 30, 2015: New York City activists march in East Harlem to demand freedom for Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera. The 72-year-old independence activist has spent 34 years behind bars—including over 12 years in solitary confinement—for the thought crime of "seditious conspiracy"; he has never been accused of causing harm to anyone. A Social Justice Fund grant helped the Bronx-based **National Boricua Human Rights Network** publicize the demonstration and bring together a broad coalition. López Rivera is not scheduled for release until 2027, when he will be 84 years old. Supporters are hoping for a presidential pardon.

PHOTO: CENTAR ZA IZGRADNJU MIRA

Painting Peace

Children create a peace mural in a small park in Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the 2014 International Peace Week, organized by the **Centar za izgradnju mira** (Center for Peacebuilding). Now in its sixth year, the annual event works to heal the local communities and build awareness of the need for peacebuilding activism. A Social Justice Fund grant provided support for this year's Peace Week.

No Militarized Police

In July, **War Resisters League** activists hung a banner from the roof of the Muste building, calling on New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio to "dismantle Bratton's army." The League's campaign to Demilitarize Health and Security is protesting Police Commissioner William Bratton's plans for a heavily-armed auxiliary security force to handle "counter-terrorism" and "disorder control."

PHOTO: CINDY TRINH

Juanita Nelson, 1923-2015

PHOTO: ED HEDEMANN

"Why am I going to jail in a bathrobe?" wrote Juanita Nelson in her brilliant essay "A Matter of Freedom," describing how federal agents arrested her at her home for refusing to pay taxes for war. "What does it matter in the scheme of things whether or not you put on your clothes? Are you not making, at best, a futile gesture, at worst, flinging yourself against something which does not exist? Is freedom more important than justice?" Nelson organized sit-ins and other protests against segregation starting in 1943 with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and co-founded the pacifist group Peacemakers in 1948. She died on March 9. "A Matter of Freedom" is included in a Muste Institute anthology pamphlet, "Some Writings on War Resistance."

George Houser, 1916-2015

PHOTO: MURRAY ROSENBLITH

April 2000: Lifelong activist and Muste Institute advisory committee member George Houser speaks from the audience at a screening of "The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It," Judith Ehrlich and Rick Tejada-Flores' documentary about World War II conscientious objectors. One of the objectors was Houser, who co-founded the Congress of Racial Equality in 1942, and helped organize the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation to force the integration of interstate bus travel. He died on August 19.

Judith Malina, 1926-2015

August 1963: Radical political theater organizer and nonviolent activist Judith Malina, right, sits in with A.J. Muste and Miriam Levine at the Atomic Energy Commission's New York Office to protest nuclear weapons tests. Malina died on April 10; the Living Theatre she founded nearly seven decades ago continues to keep her work and memory alive.

PHOTO: WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

Julian Bond, 1940-2015

AP PHOTO/MARTY LEDERHANDLER

February 12, 1966: Julian Bond prepares to speak to a crowd at St. Mark's Church-on-the-Bowery in New York City following a pro-civil-rights, anti-war march. The goal of the march, wrote activist Maris Cakars in the February 25, 1966 issue of WIN magazine, was "to express our opposition to the war in Vietnam and, more immediately important, to show our solidarity with the Southerners and civil rights workers who were also demonstrating that day." Bond, a longtime civil rights and anti-war organizer, professor, and congressional representative who served on the Muste Institute's advisory committee, died on August 15.

A.J. Muste Memorial Institute

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Indigenous Costa Ricans Defend Land

August 2015: Members of a fact-finding mission from the Observatory for Human Rights and Indigenous Autonomy (ODHAIN) learn about recent attacks against the Bribri community in Salitre, Costa Rica. As the Bribri recover control of their territory, they have faced increasing violence from non-indigenous people backed by powerful forces seeking to profit from the area's resources. **FRENAPI (National Indigenous Peoples' Front)** founded ODHAIN in 2012 to investigate and report on human rights abuses affecting indigenous peoples in Costa Rica. Since 2007, the Muste Institute's NOVA Fund has supported FRENAPI's work with annual grants through the Peace and Justice Service (SERPAJ) of Costa Rica.

PHOTO: ODHAIN

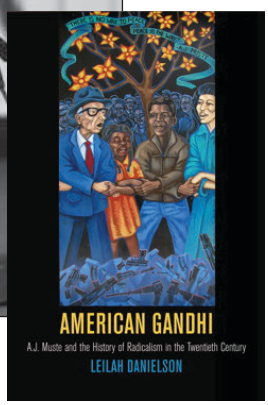
Youth Speak Out: Stop Deportation!

PHOTO: YOUTH RISE TEXAS

Teens impacted by a parent's incarceration or deportation call attention to the number of families who are separated each year by unjust immigration policies. The action was part of the first annual Youth Organizing Institute, a leadership development and mentorship program organized in Austin by **Youth Rise Texas** with help from a Social Justice Fund grant. Participants created a multimedia performance project called "My Life Without You," harnessing the power of their own family experiences to speak out, educate others and demand change.

Author: A.J. is "American Gandhi"

PHOTO: ED HEDEMANN



March 2015: Author and history professor Leilah Danielson discusses her new book about A.J. Muste at an event organized by the local New York City chapter of the War Resisters League. Muste Institute board member David McReynolds joined the conversation, sharing memories of his many years working closely with A.J. Muste. Danielson's book, *American Gandhi: A.J. Muste and the History of Radicalism in the Twentieth Century*, was published last year by Penn Press. Its cover features a mural created by artist Christopher Cardinale for the Muste building.

Empowering Young Immigrants

For two weeks each August, the **New York State Youth Leadership Council** (NYSLC) takes over the hallways of the Muste building with its Youth Empowerment Program!, providing young immigrants with the tools they need to strengthen their political analysis and commit to making transformative change in their communities. Posters on the walls lay out a historical timeline of immigrant resistance, and guest workshop facilitators take participants deeper into intersecting issues, such as gender oppression, reproductive rights, environmental justice, militarization, anti-Blackness, and police brutality. The Muste Institute supports NYSLC's work through an annual sheltering grant; a Social Justice Fund grant in April of this year went to bring together undocumented students for peer mentoring, leadership development, community building, resource-sharing and activism around the right to a higher education.

PHOTOS: NYSYLC

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ESSAY SERIES ON NONVIOLENCE

#1: Martin Luther King, Jr. – America's leading apostle of human dignity – *Loving Your Enemies*; *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*; *Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam.* Also in Spanish – see #13.

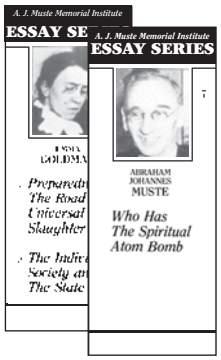
#2: Barbara Deming – the feminist connection to nonviolence – *On Revolution and Equilibrium*

#3: Henry David Thoreau – the original architect of resistance – *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

#4: Jessie Wallace Hughan – suffragist, peace activist, founder of the War Resisters League – *Pacifism and Invasion*; *On Duelling*

#5: Emma Goldman – fiery orator, anarchist, agitator for peace and liberation – *Preparedness: The Road to Universal Slaughter*; *The Individual, Society and the State*

#6: Rosa Luxemburg – courageous leader of Germany's democratic socialist movement – *Prison Letters*



#7: A. J. Muste – foremost 20th Century Pacifist theoretician and activist, minister, socialist – *Who Has the Spiritual Atom Bomb?*

#8: *On Wars of Liberation* – th[illegible]ays on pacifi[illegible] to arm[illegible]om struggles, including analysis of Gandhi's position

OUT OF PRINT

#9: Aldous Huxley – Twentieth C[illegible] visio[illegible]nic writer – *S[illegible]Liberty and Peace*

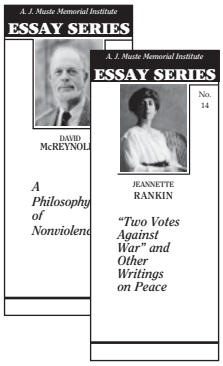
TEMPORARILY OUT OF PRINT

#10: Paul Goodman – pacifist, anarchist, activist – *The Morality of Scientific Technology*; *The Psychology of Being Powerless*

#11: *Some Writings on War Tax Resistance* – thoughts, poems, tales from resisters, including Juanita Nelson, Allen Ginsberg and Pete Seeger

#12: Sidney Lens – peace and labor activist, socialist, occasional political candidate – six articles spanning three decades on the state of the U.S. labor movement

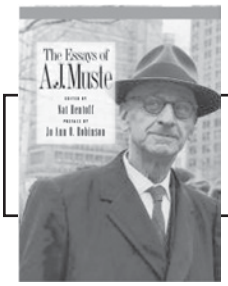
#13: (Spanish) Martin Luther King, Jr. – Spanish language translation of *Loving Your Enemies*, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* and *Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam*.



#14: Jeannette Rankin – first woman in Congress, suffragist, pacifist – *"Two Votes Against War" and Other Writings on Peace*

#15: David McReynolds – longtime activist with the War Resisters League, Socialist Party presidential candidate – *A Philosophy of Nonviolence*

Peace Agitator: The Story of A.J. Muste, by Nat Hentoff. A 250-page biography with many photos, profiling the 'grandfather' of the U.S. peace movement – minister, labor activist, pacifist and resister. Introduction by Larry Gara.



The Essays of A.J. Muste

Edited by Nat Hentoff, preface by Jo Ann O. Robinson. Originally issued in 1967, this 500-page edition includes Muste's "Notes for an Autobiography," plus essays on pacifism, civil rights, trade unionism and foreign policy, written between 1905 and 1966.

Wear Your Peace Shirt.
Muste Institute t-shirts are black cotton with a four-color geometric design and the words: *"There is no way to peace, peace is the way – A.J. Muste"* Available in large and extra large. Shirts are made in the U.S.A.

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7	A. J. Muste	_____
~~8~~	~~On Wars of Liberation~~	_____
~~9~~	~~Aldous Huxley~~	_____
10	Paul Goodman	_____
11	War Tax Resistance	_____
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